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## A busy 2012

A look back on the water with PoCoMar  
Page 3

## Share Christmas

A holiday dinner for all  
Page 8

## Beachwatch

Monitoring stations watch water quality  
Page 5

## Tapas twist

A bistro for adventurous tastes  
Page 11

# INPORT NEWS

SERVING PORT COLBORNE • WAINFLEET • SHERKSTON • LOWBANKS • ISSUE NO. 50 VOLUME 16

For news updated daily see [www.inportnews.ca](http://www.inportnews.ca)

## Community turns out to support Jason

SARAH FERGUSON  
InPort News Staff

**PORT COLBORNE** — It's hard for Tammy Marion to put into words how she feels. It was more than a month ago when her grandson, five-year-old Jason Bekker-Thompson, was diagnosed with cancer.

On Saturday, the community came to together and raised more than \$5,000 for Jason's family. The money will help them pay for medical bills as well as food and gas for commuting back and forth to hospital as Jason battles T-cell acute lymphoblastic leukemia, a cancer of

particular white blood cells called T-cells.

"It's absolutely wonderful," Marion said, about the two fundraisers that were held in Port Colborne, with the help of Jason's older brother, nine-year-old Connor.

"I can't even put into words how I feel," Marion said about the support her family received over the weekend.

When volunteers arrived Saturday morning, raindrops were falling to the ground and the weather didn't seem to want to co-operate, but the day turned out well none-the-less.

see **FUNDRAISER** | page 2



In Port News Photo

Pamela Koudijs, a photographer and friend of the family, took a picture of Tammy Marion, and her grandson Connor Thompson Saturday. Two fundraisers, which included mini family photo sessions at the Port Colborne Historical and Marine Museum by Koudijs, raised funds for Marion's five-year-old grandson Jason, who was recently diagnosed with cancer.

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# upfront

## FUNDRAISER

### Spirits bright despite weather

#### FROM PAGE 1

"The day started off so gloomy because of the weather but all of the volunteers and the people who came to support us made the day so bright," Marion said.

The first fundraiser was held at Centre Des Aines Francophone, on Mitchell St. The community was invited to attend a large garage sale, with books, clothes and toys. There was photos with Santa Claus, and Fluffy the Clown make Christmas creations out of the balloons, Marion said.

Pamela Koudja, a photographer and friend of the family, did mini family photo sessions at the Port Colborne Historical and Marine Museum as for donations to Jason's family.

Marion said Jason was unable to attend the fundraisers because his fever spiked the night before and he was rushed to hospital in Hamilton. But he was comfortable and resting at home Saturday afternoon.

"He is doing much better now," Marion said.

On behalf of her family, Marion would like to say thank you to everyone who showed their support to Jason and the rest of her family.

"Scott, (Jason's father)



Jason Bekker-Thompson

wanted me to thank everyone for him from the bottom of his heart," she said.

The grandmother said the family is taking each day one at a time, and will consider holding another fundraiser sometime in the spring.

If anyone would like to make a donation to help Jason, and his family, during his cancer treatments, they can send money to a Meridian Credit Union account in his name. The account number is 2213841, the bank number is 837 and the transit number is 69062. Donations can also be made online at [www.prayersforjasonthompson.com](http://www.prayersforjasonthompson.com).

## VALE HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTRE: Sneak peek at programming just days away

### YMCA 'excited' about Port Colborne

DAVE JOHNSON  
InPort News Staff

**WAINFLEET** — As the opening of the Vale Health and Wellness Centre draws closer, Mike O'Callaghan is becoming more excited.

O'Callaghan is the general manager of the YMCA going into the new centre, on Elizabeth St., which opens on Feb. 16, and will take care of the "warm side" of the \$32-million facility.

The warm side refers to the centre's two pools, double gym, exercise facility, eight outdoor bocce courts and walking/jogging track for all-season use.

"New state-of-the-art equipment is being purchased," said O'Callaghan at Port Colborne-Wainfleet Chamber of Commerce's quarterly breakfast last week at Jericho House in Wainfleet.

He was joined by YMCA Niagara campaign director Kristy McMirrick, and the two spoke about the Y in general and Port Colborne. "The facility itself is second-to-none ... it's the biggest, best, modern, green, well-constructed ..." said O'Callaghan.

When the new centre opens — it replaces a pool



DAVE JOHNSON Staff Photo

The new YMCA at the Vale Health and Wellness Centre was the topic of discussion at Port Colborne-Wainfleet Chamber of Commerce's quarterly breakfast Wednesday.

and two arenas, one of which was taken down to make room for it — in addition to the pools, gym and track, it will feature two NHL-sized hockey rinks.

O'Callaghan said the gym at the centre will be able to be divided into three sections for use by various groups or for any Y programs and there will be a play centre where parents can drop off their children while

the work out in the pool or fitness centre.

"I know we're excited, I hope you're excited," he said to the business owners from Wainfleet and Port Colborne who were at the breakfast," he said.

McMirrick said the Y is already running programs in the city, with one at Lakeshore Catholic High School and two out of Steele Street School.

The program at Lakeshore, she said, sees Y staff linked with families that are new to Canada. It's designed to help them integrate into the community. Programs at Steele Street include a day camp at the school and a youth action program.

"We're excited to be part of the community in the near future," she said.

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# portraits

■ LAKE ERIE: PoCoMar crew recently recognized with awards of merit

## Busy year for marine rescue unit

DAVE JOHNSON  
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — While most of Port Colborne Marine Auxiliary Rescue (PoCoMAR) unit's calls were uneventful — and all successful — there was one unusual task this past boating season.

John Conlin, the unit's new commander, said the unusual night call came on Aug. 1 when members were paged by the Joint Rescue Co-ordination Centre in Trenton about a person on a raft that disappeared from the view of people on shore at Sherston Shores.

Because there was shallow water involved it was recommended and approved that PoCoMAR take both its rescue boats, said Conlin.

The Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary unit, with 30 active all-volunteer members from Port Colborne, Wainfleet, Welland and Fort Erie, operates two vessels out of Sugarloaf Harbour Marina. Donald R. Workman, an 11-year-old vessel built in Port Dover, and Ted Cook, a custom-built jet boat that can



SUPPLIED PHOTO

PoCoMAR crew members awarded the Operational Medal of Merit are, from left, Cal Peyton, Charles Adams, Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary district director Nigel Spink, who presented the awards, and Brian Canter and Scott Wolfe. The four men took part in an eight-hour-long task that saw them rescue people from two separate vessels.

operate in water as shallow as 30 centimetres.

What made the call unusual was that after a 5.5-hour search that included assistance

from a C130 Hercules aircraft from Trenton air base, which dropped parachute flares for about an hour, and on-shore help from Niagara Regional Police, it was learned "there was no missing person report."

Other calls to which PoCoMAR has responded have been far more serious.

One in early September 2011, and involved two rescues by a PoCoMAR crew, recently resulted in awards of merit being presented to the men who took the eight-hour-long task that day.

"A call was received to send PoCoMAR out to rescue a disabled vessel about 13 kilometres out in Lake Erie. The vessel was found after two incorrect locations were investigated, and a tow was started. Then, another call came to pick up two persons in the water because a small boat capsized."

Conlin said JRCC directed the crew to drop the first vessel — something never

done before in the history of PoCoMAR — reassure the boaters that someone else would pick them up and then to proceed at top speed to the two people in the water about 16 kilometres away.

"The two were rescued and treated for hypothermia. They

were then transported to shore and turned over to EMS units. PoCoMAR then towed the capsized boat to shore in the Grand River."

The crew that day — recognized by the Canadian Coast Guard with Operational Merit Medals — comprised coxswain

Brian Canter, Charles Adams, Cal Peyton and Scott Wolfe.

Conlin said three new members joined PoCoMAR this year. Another piece of exciting news for the unit was an agreement negotiated with Canadian Niagara Power.

"We can use the former Port Colborne Hydro building to house our vessels and be able to service them in a dry, heated garage," Conlin said. "There are rooms and offices where we can conduct training classes and meetings and store our portable equipment and instruments in a secure and hospitable environment. We sincerely appreciate Canadian Niagara Power's assistance in this regard."

Also this past season, PoCoMAR participated in a memorial plaque dedication at Crystal Beach Park honouring six U.S. Coast Guard sailors lost in a hurricane on Light Salvage 82 on Nov. 10, 1913, off Point Abino. Other vessels, including the U.S. Coast Guard, Port Erie Fire Department and Sandman from Port Colborne, were present.

PoCoMAR celebrates its 25th anniversary next year.

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SUPPLIED PHOTO

Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary district director Nigel Spink, right, presents a certificate to PoCoMAR member Chris Loisele for 20 years of service. PoCoMAR member Andrew Watts, who was absent, received a certificate for five years of service.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Donald R. Workman, left, an 11-year-old vessel built in Port Dover, and Ted Cook, a custom-built jet boat that can operate in water as shallow as 30 centimetres, sit inside the former Port Colborne Hydro building for the winter.

# INPORT NEWS

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## Ourview

### Actions of teachers' unions help Grits' re-election bid

With rotating strikes in Ontario public elementary schools starting, let's drop the pretense teacher unions are in it for anyone but themselves. While unions talk of defending democratic rights and collective bargaining, imagine their reaction if Ontario imposed benefits for teachers that school boards opposed. Would teachers unions refuse the benefits? Hardly. In fact, Catholic teachers embraced such a deal earlier this year over the objection of Catholic school boards, including one in London.

Make no mistake, public teacher unions are alarmed only by what amounts to a small reduction in salary and the loss of accrued sick days that for some numbered into the hundreds.

Their arguments to the contrary are disingenuous and everyone knows it.

That leaves teachers in a precarious position to demand anything.

But when it comes to the science of negotiation, teachers unions are failing.

To negotiate well, you must understand the other side. For eight years, the McGuinty government treated teachers like royalty, scrapping professional testing that unions found objectionable and adding jobs by restricting class size and creating full-day kindergarten.

It was a little more than a year ago that the head of the elementary teachers' union urged Ontarians to vote Liberal.

Now, those same union leaders vilify Liberals daily as if the self-proclaimed "education premier" took delight in telling teachers to sacrifice some of their gains.

What really motivates Liberals is this: Another election is likely months away and they want to show the electorate they will tame a \$15-billion deficit.

It's why they took on Ontario doctors and other public-sector unions and radically changed the ways hospitals are funded. Now it's the teachers' turn and Liberals are determined to do it in ways that don't concede gains made in the classroom to benefit kids.

Hint to teachers' unions: Liberals want you to strike. They want you to show you aren't responsible enough to do the right thing so they can justify imposing a settlement. They want you to walk out on your students in full strikes so the very next day they can order you back to work and garner support from the nearly 99% of Ontarians who have no teachers.

## ■ COLUMN

# Gallows humour from the past that isn't for the faint of heart

Gallows humour might well have begun with Maria Antoinette, the pompous and extravagant Queen of France who was executed for treason during the French Revolution.

Known as the epitome of arrogance, it was therefore a shock to all who heard her final words: "Pardon me, Sir, I meant not to do it."



**The last words of those condemned to die by the proverbial sword still sometimes lean to levity.**

As it turns out, Marie Antoinette was not apologizing for provoking the revolution in which approximately 56,000 French citizens were killed with one-third of them beheaded. She was in fact apologizing to her executioner as she staggered toward the guillotine and accidentally stepped on his foot.

Although the blade has long since been replaced by the guillotine, the firing squad, the electric chair and now a chemical injection—the last words of those condemned to die by the proverbial sword still sometimes lean to levity.

James D. French was the last person executed before Oklahoma rescinded the death penalty. A career criminal who wanted to die, he murdered his cell mate to force the state to end his own life.



**WILLIAM THOMAS**  
HUMOUR

Looking at the ghoulish faces of reporters gathered to witness the event, French's last words were: "How's this for a headline? French Fries!"

Carl Panzram was not a nice or even a patient man, not when he was a serial killer or about to be terminated himself in Indiana. "Hurry up, you Hoosier bastard, I could kill 10 men while you're fooling around." Somehow, I don't think Carl would have been a very good candidate for rehabilitation.

Some last words like those of domestic killer David Martinez are downright poetic: "Only the sky and the green grass goes on forever and today is a good day to die." On the contrary, it had not been a good day to die for Martinez's live-in girlfriend and her son.

Prior to being chemically put to death in Maryland, triple murderer John Frederick Thano got his farewell speech down to one word. "Adios." A man of many murders and many few words. About 20% of inmates choose to say even less than Thano which is nothing



whatsoever. By far the most common last statement heard by execution witnesses is: "I'm ready, warden."

Naturally Texas, where they have executed 484 death-row inmates since capital punishment was reinstated in 1976 and four times as many convicts as any other state, would have the largest selection of peculiar last words.

Just before murderer and rapist Johnny Frank Garrett was given a lethal injection by Texas authorities, he solemnly said: "I'd like to

thank my family for loving me and taking care of me. And the rest of the world can kiss my ass!"

Garrett may have had a very good reason to be angry at the world. A documentary titled *Last Word* makes a very strong case for his innocence. Back in

the 1880s it was difficult to punish someone with death who believed in world destruction. Said union activist and founder of the Socialistic Labor Party George Engel just before they hanged him: "Hurrah for anarchy! This is the happiest moment of my life!"

It all began with Marie Antoinette and the guillotine, the beheading device which consisted of a heavy blade dropping at the speed of death between two upright posts.

In order to provide a more humane way of killing citizens during the French Revolution, this head chopper was designed by a physician. The year was 1792 and gallows humour was created almost immediately.

As the story goes, a condemned aristocrat was standing on the death platform with his head over the chopping block when a sudden gust of wind rocked the stage and shook the posts on either side of him. Jerking his head up and looking at his executioner he yelled: "Good Lord man, is this thing safe?"

[www.williamthomas.ca](http://www.williamthomas.ca)

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DAVE JOHNSON Staff Photo

A weather station sits atop washrooms at Nickel Beach in Port Colborne. The station, one of four in Niagara, will be used to better predict water quality and whether beaches should be closed due to high levels of E. coli bacteria.

■ **ENVIRONMENT:** Niagara Region water-quality data to be web-based

# Weather stations to report beach conditions



It takes between 24 and 48 hours to get those results back and conditions on the beaches could have changed in that time. We think this model (with the weather and water stations) will be more timely and more helpful."

Glen Hudgin

DAVE JOHNSON  
In Port News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — Weather stations and water monitoring equipment will give Niagara Region plenty of data on local beaches starting this spring.

And the reams of information to be collected by those instruments, at Nickel Beach in Port Colborne, Lakeside Beach in St. Catharines, Crystal Beach in Port Erie and Long Beach in Wainfleet, will be used to better predict water quality and whether beaches should be closed due to high levels of E. coli bacteria.

Glen Hudgin, Niagara's man-

ager of environmental health, said the weather stations, like one installed atop washroom facilities at Nickel Beach, will collect information such as air temperature, wind speed and direction, relative humidity and solar radiation.

"Solar radiation is how much sunlight reaches the water surface... it kills off bacteria in the water. Weather really has an impact on water quality."

Rainy conditions, for example, can cause large sewer runoff, which can lead to higher levels of E. coli bacteria.

see **WATER QUALITY** | page 6

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## ■ WATER QUALITY

# Beach monitors to forecast conditions

## FROM PAGE 5

Hudgin said not every beach on the list will have the water-monitoring equipment — which will be used to look at water temperature,

conductivity, wave height and turbidity — but each will have the weather stations.

Turbidity is the cloudiness in water caused by sand or other particles stirred up by

waves

It's hoped the weather station in Long Beach can be used to monitor several beaches in the area at the same time as they're all in

the same Lake Erie bay.

"Information collected from the water equipment will be sent to the weather station and that, and information from the weather station, will be sent to a satellite and then back down to us via the Internet. All of our data will be web-based."

The information will be sent automatically and uploads will be sent every 15 minutes.

"We'll have a lot of data."

That data will be more

up-to-date than information collected by the region now when it comes to water quality and levels of E. coli bacteria. It will be used to predict days when the water at Niagara beaches should be closed to swimmers.

Hudgin said public health staff now collect water samples at 26 beaches each day during the swimming season, gathering a number of samples per beach and then shipping those samples off to a lab. Beaches are

closed to swimming when there's 100 E. coli bacteria per 100 mL of water.

"It takes between 24 and 48 hours to get those results back and conditions on the beaches could have changed in the time. We think this model (with the weather and water stations) will be more timely and more helpful."

Depending on the information gathered from the equipment, Hudgin said results may be used to forecast nearby beach conditions.

He said there's a little fine-tuning to be done before all of the equipment is operational and said the region is aiming for late April or early May for a start of the data collection.

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**Project Name:** Niagara Region Wind Farm

**Project Location:** The proposed project is located within Haldimand County and Niagara Region (including the Townships of Wainfleet and West Lincoln and the Town of Lincoln). The electrical interconnection components are located within the Town of Lincoln and the Township of West Lincoln, in Niagara Region, and in Haldimand County in southern Ontario. **Dated at Haldimand County and Niagara Region this the 5th of December 2012.**

Niagara Region Wind Corporation ("NRWC") is planning to engage in a renewable energy project in respect of which the issuance of a renewable energy approval is required. The distribution of this notice and the project itself are subject to the provisions of the *Environmental Protection Act* (Act) Part V.0.1 and Ontario Regulation 359/09, as amended, (Regulation), which covers Renewable Energy Approvals. This notice is being distributed in accordance with Section 15 of the Regulation prior to an application being submitted and assessed for completeness by the Ministry of the Environment. This Notice of Draft Site Plan is in reference to the inclusion of a new substation for the Project. The other substation and all turbine locations, as well as noise receptors, remain the same. The legal effect of the publishing of this Notice is that pursuant to Section 54(1.2) of the Regulation, NRWC does not have to take into account a noise receptor as defined by the Act that did not exist as of the day before NRWC published the Draft Site Plan for the Project.

The project team will be holding a series of Public Meetings, as required under section 16(1) of the Regulation. The purpose of these meetings will be to present the findings of the Draft Renewable Energy Approval (REA) Reports, and to present proposed revisions to the Draft Site Plan, released in August 2012. We are offering multiple meeting locations and dates for this event. The sessions will be drop-in style, and each session will be identical so that you can attend whichever session is most convenient:

	Tuesday, February 5, 2013	Wednesday, February 6, 2013	Thursday, February 7, 2013
1:00 to 4:00 p.m.	Town of Grimsby Peach King Centre Auditorium 162 Livingston Ave Grimsby	Town of Pelham Old Pelham Town Hall 491 Canboro Road Ridgville	Township of Wainfleet Firefighters' Memorial Community Hall 31907 Park Street Wainfleet
6:30 to 8:30 p.m.	Town of Lincoln Bled Hall 4650 South Service Road Beamsville	Township of West Lincoln Wellandport Community Centre 5042 Canborough Road (R5963) Wellandport	Haldimand County Lowbanks Community Centre 2633 Northshore Drive Lowbanks
		EXTENDED HOURS: 4:30 - 10	

## Project Description:

Pursuant to the Act and Regulation, the facility, in respect of which the project is to be engaged in, is considered to be a Class 4 Wind Facility. If approved, this facility would have a total maximum name plate capacity of 230 MW consisting of 77 turbines (80 potential locations identified). The project location is shown in the adjacent map.

NRWC has been refining the project location and completing technical and environmental studies in preparation for finalizing the project layout. The proposed revisions to the Draft Site Plan include amending the location of the electrical interconnection components further south to accommodate a new location for a second substation. The results of the noise modelling meet the current provincial standards with mitigation. The proposed revisions are incorporated in the Draft REA Reports (see list below) and will be discussed at the Public Meetings.

## Documents for Public Inspection:

The applicant, NRWC, has prepared supporting documents in order to comply with the requirements of the Act and Regulation. Written copies of the draft supporting documents will be available for public inspection starting December 5, 2012 to February 5, 2013 at the locations listed below and on the project website ([www.nrwc.ca](http://www.nrwc.ca)):

- Draft Project Description Report
- Draft Construction Plan Report
- Draft Design & Operations Report (includes Property Line Setback Assessment Report and Noise Study Report)
- Draft Decommissioning Plan Report
- Draft Natural Heritage Assessment & Environmental Impact Study Report
- Draft Environmental Effects Monitoring Plan
- Draft Water Assessment and Water Body Report
- Draft Protected Properties Assessment
- Draft Heritage Assessment
- Draft Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment
- Draft Stage 2 Archaeological Assessment
- Draft Wind Turbine Specifications Report

## Document Viewing Locations:

Town of Grimsby Municipal Office, 160 Livingston Avenue, Grimsby  
Grimsby Public Library, 18 Carnegie Lane, Grimsby  
Haldimand County Municipal Office, 45 Munsee Street North, Cayuga  
Cayuga Public Library (Haldimand), 28 Cayuga Street North, Cayuga  
Haldimand County Dumfries Satellite Office, 111 Broad Street East, Dumfries  
Town of Lincoln Municipal Office, 4800 South Service Road, Beamsville  
Lincoln Public Library (Fleming Branch), 4996 Beam Street, Beamsville  
Region of Niagara Municipal Office, 2201 St. Davids Road, Thorold

## Project Contacts and Information:

To learn more about the project, or to communicate questions or comments, please contact:

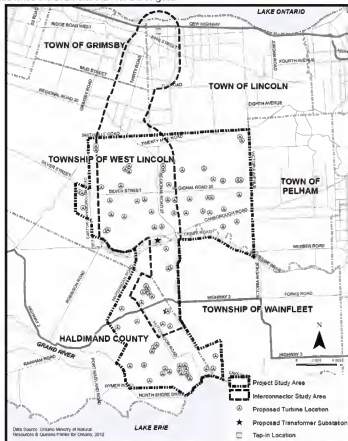
Project Email Address: [info@nrwc.ca](mailto:info@nrwc.ca)

Project Website: [www.nrwc.ca](http://www.nrwc.ca)

Project Phone Number: 905-390-3306 or 1-855-720-2892 (toll free)

Robert Daniels, Vice President  
Niagara Region Wind Corporation  
277 Lakeshore Road East, Suite 211  
Oakville, ON L6J 6J3

J.A. (AJ) Leggett, BA, MCIP, RPP  
Project Manager, Stantec Consulting Ltd.  
300 - 675 Cochrane Drive West Tower  
Markham, ON L3R 0B8



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■ VALE HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTRE: Opening in February

## Get a sneak peek at Port's new YMCA

InPortNEWS Staff

PORT COLBORNE — Residents next weekend will get their first peek at Port Colborne's new YMCA with the opening of a special welcome centre at Roselawn Centre.



**Purchasing your membership early is a great way to show your support for the new YMCA\***

Mike O'Callaghan

"Visitors will have the opportunity to learn more about YMCA programs and services, view site plans ... and purchase their memberships in advance of opening day," said Mike O'Callaghan, who will be the

centre manager it opens inside the Vale Health and Wellness Centre in February.

"Purchasing your membership early is a great way to show your support for the new YMCA and avoid long lineups on opening day."

The first 250 members will receive a special "Inaugural Membership" and will be able to use the new YMCA the minute it opens.

Volunteer opportunities, program information and details about employment at the new Y will also be available at the welcome centre.

The centre will be open Saturday, Dec. 15, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. It will also be open Mondays 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. and Wednesdays 9 a.m. to 11 a.m., excluding holidays.

For more information, revisit [www.ymcaofniagara.org](http://www.ymcaofniagara.org), call the YMCA at 905-835-9622 or e-mail [portcolborneymca@ymcaofniagara.ca](mailto:portcolborneymca@ymcaofniagara.ca).

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■ DINING: @27 owners open new bistro

# A new twist on tapas

VICTORIA GRAY  
InPort News Staff

**PORT COLBORNE** — As people develop a taste for adventurous eating, crafty business people want to offer something that will draw customers from near and far to tantalize their taste buds.

“

We've had lots of people come in and leave excited to come back and try something else.”

Linda Sloat

It took a lot of love and understanding, but Linda and Mike Sloat managed to turn an office building at 378 King St. in Port Colborne into a tastefully

unique bistro that opened last month.

The couple also owns @27 Restaurant on Main St. W., an establishment that delivers a high-quality dining experience, but the couple wanted to expand and give the region something it had never seen before — a true tapas restaurant.

Twisted Small Plates Bistro offers patrons a wide variety of unique items in small portions to share or sample individually.

“It helps maximize the dining experience,” owner Linda said. “This gives people an opportunity of trying different items. They can mix and match. Get something sweet or something spicy.”

She said people are eating fewer one-course meals and instead enjoying a selection of items for the same price or less.

All of the items at the bistro are fresh, homemade — never

frozen — and “twisted.”

The items are nothing to fear, normal foods with a twist from original recipes, including Maritime lobster mac and cheese, chorizo stuffed peppers, smoked duck sliders and more.

“There’s something for everyone on our menu,” Linda said. “We’ve had lots of people come in and leave excited to come back and try something else.”

The bistro also has its own private label VQA wines — Twisted. Wines include a Cabernet and a Chardonnay Sauvignon.

The restaurant opens for dinner at 5 p.m. Wednesday to Saturday and for lunch at 11:30 a.m. on Fridays.

The bistro is small and intimate. Tables fill quickly so call to reserve one at 289-836-9111.

victoria.gray@sunmedia.ca  
Twitter: @VazeyG



VICTORIA GRAY Staff Photo  
Mike Sloat and wife Linda have opened a new tapas restaurant on King St. in Port Colborne called Twisted Small Plates Bistro.

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# Police, pharmacists worried about oxy



QMI Agency Niagara

ST. CATHARINES — It was a blessed few months of peace for Ontario pharmacists. Finally, after years of being caught in the mel-

**DEREK RUTTAN**  
A Ridgeway pharmacist has concerns over the effects of OxyContin, an effective but highly addictive painkiller.

strom that was the illegal trade in OxyContin, which had returned to normal.

"This is a crisis that is going to happen again," said Donnie Edwards, a Ridgeway pharmacist and former chairman of the Ontario Pharmacists' Association. "I'm so disappointed the federal government has allowed this to happen."

OxyContin was a highly effective and highly addictive opioid painkiller. It eventually became a popular street drug and addicts and pushers alike would break into pharmacies to get their hands on the pills.

"I was in Ottawa recently to talk about this issue and pharmacists there told me that every week there was a pharmacy break-in somewhere," Edwards said.

"It was the same thing here. In Niagara, we had a real rash of pharmacy break-ins before OxyContin was gone."

Because of the long-standing problems of addiction and crime, the manufacturer of OxyContin stopped production and replaced it with OxyNeo, a similar drug that is much harder to crush and melt down into a street drug.

Edwards said even if someone could crush and snort it, the chemical composition of OxyNeo is such that when it hits mucus in the nose, the drug turns into a gel.

"What it does is cause nasal congestion, which the addict won't particularly like," Edwards said. "And it just doesn't give you the same kind of powerful buzz that OxyContin did."

Police reported a marked decrease in pharmacy robberies and break-ins since the supply of OxyContin dried up.

But Ottawa recently approved the generic form of OxyContin, called oxycodone, for sale in Canada.

The decision has upset pharmacists and police alike who fear the return of the chaos that OxyContin created.

"This could completely turn around all the gains that have been made," said Niagara Regional Police Det. Const. Terry Thomson of the drug unit. "We could be right back where we started."

Thomson said the kinds of safeguards Ottawa wants to impose on oxycodone, which involve tracking where drugs are shipped and to whom they're sold, won't impact the return of oxy as a popular street drug.

"That doesn't help us much from a law enforcement or public safety point of view," he said.

Edwards said not only is oxycodone the same chemical as OxyContin, it will be cheaper and lacks the chemical safeguards that makes OxyNeo less addictive and harder to use as a street drug.

"If it's cheaper, how would it not be even more popular than it was before," he said.

Edwards said there are many pharmacists who are saying they won't even carry oxycodone to avoid being targeted by thieves.

He said pharmacists can work with doctors prescribing oxycodone to try and find an alternative that will help a patient.

"You need to remember that patients are in pain and they do need pain relief," he said. "We're drug experts, and we want to work with prescribers so we can help patients."

Edwards said he was in Ottawa recently to talk to pharmacists and police about the threat posed by the return of oxycodone.

"I am just horrified that Ottawa would allow this to happen, approve oxycodone with no regard for public safety," he said.



## THE GIFT OF EXERCISE

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*It would help improve immune function, concentration, task performance, and the quality of sleep.*

*It would help reduce stress, improve mood, enhance self-esteem, and increase optimism and confidence.*

*It would help increase self-awareness and control over choices in life.*

*It would be fun, but also challenging.*

*It would allow for socialization, but also time alone, depending on her needs.*

*It would come in all different modes and styles, and adapt to various environments and weather condition.*

*Finally, it would have a good Consumer Reports rating, supported by scientific data from reputable sources.*

*After compiling my list, I realized that the only gift that meets all the criteria is the gift of exercise. Have a happy and healthy life my friend.*

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■ **MUNICIPAL FINANCE:** Port Colborne rep council's youngest politician

# Barrick new region finance co-chair

JEFF BOLICHOWSKI  
QMI Agency Niagara

**THOROLD** — Regional council's youngest budget hawk has been chosen to help set Niagara Region's fiscal agenda.

Port Colborne Coun. David Barrick was chosen co-chair of the region's corporate services committee. He'll join Pelham Mayor Dave Augustyn and replace Thorold Coun. Henry D'Angela in steering the committee, which handles the region's dollar dealings.

That means he will have



**I can have a closer eye on what happens. I think through this term, my focus has basically driven more towards the financial end."**

Port Colborne Coun. David Barrick

a part in setting the committee's agenda. He'll also help choose a new corpo-

rate services commissioner to replace Brian Hutchings, now Brock University's vice-president of finance.

It's a step up for Barrick, at 33 the youngest member of council. He was previously vice-chair of the planning committee.

"For me, it means I can have a closer eye on what happens," he said. "I think through this term, my focus has basically driven more towards the financial end."

Barrick said being co-chair offers him better access to staff and information.



Barrick

It also sets up something of an odd couple handling the gavel. Barrick, who said he's for slimming down services, and co-chair Augustyn have been on opposite ends of several big budget debates.

"Him and I have cordial relations. Certainly in the past, our views haven't

coincided," he said.

Barrick's promotion left the planning vice-chair's job vacant and councillors deadlocked over picking a replacement Wednesday, as Niagara Falls Coun. Selina Volpatti and West Lincoln Mayor Doug Joyner each earned nine committee votes.

In the end, councillors tossed their names in a hat and asked acting clerk Janet Pilon to pick. Volpatti was chosen.

She'll join Lincoln Mayor Bill Hodgson, the re-elected planning committee chair.

## MUSICAL CHAIRS



Council's four standing committees all went through their chair elections this week.

The chairs, co-chairs and vice chairs are all elected to two-year terms.

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In Port News File Photo  
Kathy Burtnek was elected to her sixth term as Catholic school board chair. She is seen here taking part in Catholic Education Week, standing among eight pillars depicting graduate expectations for students.



# SPOTLIGHT on service



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■ **COURT:** Ian Thomson said sentences not heavy enough

# Firebombers jailed for attacking Port Colborne home

KARENA WALTER  
QMI AGENCY NIAGARA

ST. CATHARINES — Four men involved in firebombing a Port Colborne man's home with Molotov cocktails until he came outside and fired a gun were given penitentiary

sentences Monday. The blame arson-for-hire attack, which was captured on video, didn't result in injuries to homeowner Ian Thomson, but did singe one of his two huskies when a dog run was hit with a flaming beer bottle.

Judge David Harris said Thomson

was at risk, even if the four men — Randy Weaver, 50, Richard Coulthurst, 48, Michael Theberge, 22, and Justin Lee, 21 — may not have intended to injure him.

"Fire is an unpredictable thing and they had no way of knowing for certain that Mr. Thomson would not be

injured or even killed in the fire that they started," Harris said in the Ontario Court of Justice in St. Catharines Monday.

The four men pleaded guilty to arson disregarding life at an earlier date for burning Thomson's rural house on Snider Rd. on Aug. 22, 2010.

They received sentences ranging from two years to four and a half years in prison for the attack.

Thomson said outside the courtroom he believes he was the victim of an attempted murder.

"I'm livid," he said. "These guys have effectively destroyed my life. They should have got life, all of them."

The court heard earlier that Thomson had a history of disputes with his neighbour, which involved occasional calls to police.

As a result, Thomson installed about a dozen video surveillance cameras around his property, which captured the attack.

None of the four men knew Thomson directly.

In Harris's written decision, he said Weaver was approached by Coulthurst to intimidate Thomson so he would move. Weaver was to be paid \$5,000 for "the job" with half up front and half when it was done.

Weaver recruited Lee and Theberge. Coulthurst's nephew, to help for a "nominal" fee. Theberge and Lee had often worked for Weaver and were involved in the drug subculture, Harris wrote.

On Aug. 22, 2010, Theberge drove to the end of Forkes Rd. and parked his vehicle while Lee and Weaver filled 12 beer bottles with gasoline and inserted scraps of bed sheets into the bottles.

Theberge then drove on Snider Rd., passing Thomson's house twice before parking beside a bush area.

Thomson was asleep in his bedroom when he was woken up by the explosion of a Molotov cocktail thrown by Weaver that hit the side of the house between the bathroom and master bedroom windows.

Weaver threw another cocktail at the front of the house, striking and breaking the kitchen window. The curtains, siding and window frame were scorched and melted and the wooden deck below caught fire.

Lee threw a Molotov cocktail into the dog run and against the north wall of the house. He lit four other cocktails but they were not thrown.

see FIREBOMBERS | page 20

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## ■ FIREBOMBERS

# Judge orders arsonists to pay restitution

FROM PAGE 18

Thomson edited the front door of his home with a handgun and discharged three rounds, prompting Lee, Weaver and Theberge to run away. Thomson put out the fire with a garden hose and called 911.

Meanwhile, the trio drove back to Coulthurst's residence and celebrated.

Harris sentenced Coulthurst and Lee to three years in jail in custody each.

Lee received a further 77 days

of pre-sentence custody for an unrelated break and enter charge at an LCBO in Welland on Sept. 13, 2010.

Theberge was sentenced to two years for the arson. He also received 30 days for attempting to obstruct justice, to be served at the same time, for telling a potential female witness in the case to "keep her mouth shut" or "certain males would find out if she did not."

Weaver was given 880 days of pre-sentence custody, approximately 28 months, plus

two years in prison. That will be followed by three years of probation.

He also got two years for having his face disguised with a ski mask during part of the attack and six months for breaching probation, to be served at the same time.

All four men were told they are jointly responsible for paying over \$11,200 in restitution.

Thomson said the attack has destroyed his life.

He was charged with numer-

ous firearms offences after he fired a handgun to scare off the attackers and said he's up to more than \$50,000 in lawyer's fees.

The damage to his home was more than \$11,000 but he said that didn't include another \$4,000 damage to his hot tub.

He said he was taking environmental geoscience courses at Brock University to start a second career, after being hurt on the job as a hoisting engineer, but his grades plummeted after the firebombing.

## THE EVENTS

**Aug. 22, 2010:** Ian Thomson's Strider Rd. home attacked by three assailants throwing Molotov cocktails. He fires three shots to scare them away and is charged with careless use of a firearm. He is later charged with three more firearms offences.

**December 2010:** Randy Weaver of Port Colborne, Justin Lee of Welland are arrested. Richard Coulthurst of Welland and Michael Theberge of Port Colborne are later charged.

**March 2, 2011:** Protest held outside the Welland courthouse in support of Thomson. Charges of pointing a firearm and careless use of a firearm are dropped by the Crown.

**Jan. 30, 2012:** Thomson's trial on two counts of careless storage of firearms begins in Welland.

**Oct. 25, 2012:** Judge adjourns case to Jan. 3, 2013.

**Dec. 3, 2012:** The four charged with arson are sentenced.



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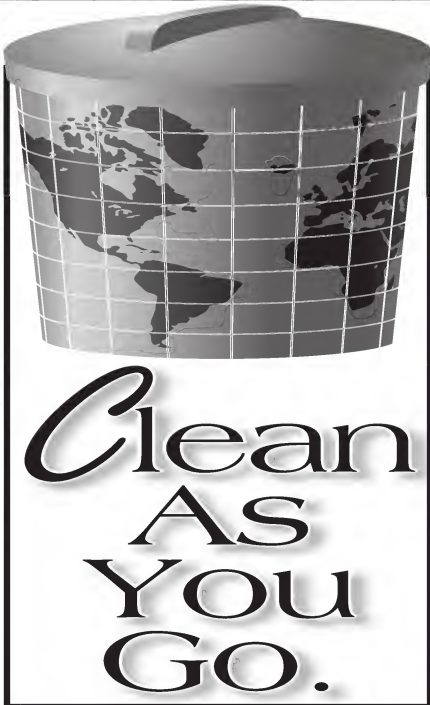
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## ■ TAXPAYERS: Expect to shell out more this year

# Not a lot of tax breaks

VICTORIA GRAY  
InPort News Staff

Residents of Niagara can expect to shell out another \$25 this year for the regional tax bill.

The region passed the operating and capital budgets Thursday night at the council meeting.

The budget will see taxes jump 1.97% on the average home. The average homeowner will give about \$1,317 to fund Niagara Region services.

It will include \$59 million for a new Burgoyne Bridge, \$15 million for new Niagara Regional Police voice radios and a \$3.3-million housing plan to help cover the loss of the Community Start-Up and Maintenance Benefit.

Water and sewer rates will jump 2.47%.

Mayor of Pelham and regional councillor Dave Augustyn, chair of the budget review committee of the Whole said the region found \$1.5 million in savings to keep the income low.



**In these tough economic times nobody likes increases, but I do think it's a manageable increase and addresses some key priorities in Wainfleet."**

April Jeffs

"We've been looking for inefficiencies in operating

costs and we've made substantial improvements," he said. "Council is also looking at the way in which we do business with some of the significant businesses we have like, water waste. The review is supposed to come up next year and we'll look to see what we can do there."

Augustyn said the region also approved a 10-year sustainable capitol financing plan that Regional councillor David Barrick doesn't think is sustainable at all.

He voted against the capitol budget because the region's \$220 million budget includes a \$73 million loan, doesn't stop there. The plan is to borrow money every year for the next 10 years.

Barrick said the region is already more than \$200 million in debt and they



Augustyn

Barrick

shouldn't be accumulating more."

"Using debt to fund a Sustainable Capital Financing Plan is not a wise move, in my opinion," he said. "A large portion of that sustainability is borrowing. I don't count that as a sustainable plan."

He wants to see more information coming in with project funding applications, but he does support many of the legislated projects. He just wants more information and to keep the region out

of debt.

On the positive side of an increase Pelham will have Regional Rd. 20 from Pelham St. to Peachtree Park.

Mayor of Wainfleet and regional councillor Barry Sharpe was satisfied with the budget and going to push to get East Main St. repaved.

The region also set aside \$300,000 for a study to paint and rehabilitate the East Main Street bridge in 2014 and will spend \$1 million to light the Woodlawn Rd. interchange on the Hwy. 406.

Mayor of Port Colborne and regional councillor member Vance Badway said the increase was acceptable.

"Overall when you look at it regionally (the budget) is within inflation rate," he said. "Although we all wanted to hit zero, inflation does play a

roll in all our lives."

He was happy to see the region offer a lot of incentives to compliment the city's industrial and retail incentives. The city also partnered with the region to lay railroad tracks near the canal.

Mayor of Wainfleet and regional councillor April Jeffs wasn't too happy about the increase and knows some residents won't be happy, but she's glad the region has allotted funds to help keep an emergency response vehicle and first responders in the town.

"In these tough economic times nobody likes increases, but I do think it's a manageable increase and addresses some key priorities in Wainfleet," she said.

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# The Healthy Cupboard

## CARALLUMA FIMBRIATA

Genesis Today's 100% pure Caralluma Fimbriata extract is derived from a cactus that grows abundantly in India where it has been consumed raw, seasoned with spices and cooked in traditional Indian dishes for centuries. Nicknamed "The Hunger Buster," this edible cactus is known in its native India as "famine food," because it was eaten during times of famine and on hunting treks for its powerful appetite-suppressing and thirst-quenching qualities. Our supplement contains an exclusive 10:1 (10 to 1) extract of Caralluma Fimbriata, which means it takes 10 pounds of cactus to create one pound of pure powder for 10 times the appetite suppressing power. The potent natural elements in this remarkable Indian cactus help curb food cravings, disrupt fat formation, and support lean muscle mass, making it an excellent addition for a healthy weight loss regimen.



## PURE GREEN COFFEE BEAN

Genesis Today's Pure Green Coffee Bean with Svetol® is an especially effective supplement containing two types of raw, unroasted green coffee bean extract for energy and metabolism support: our regular Green Coffee Bean extract plus the brand name ingredient Svetol®. Green Coffee Bean with Svetol® is standardized to contain a potent blend of chlorogenic acids combined with other natural active compounds, which are clinically proven to promote healthy weight control, fat loss, and blood sugar levels that are already within normal range. This combined, polyphenol-rich green coffee bean extract is high in antioxidants and low in caffeine, which supports cardiovascular function and weight management without the jitters associated with overstimulation.



**Tanya and Ian Birrell**  
Owners of The Healthy Cupboard

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**TWO LOCATIONS!**

**NEW WEBSITE!**

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